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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY South West Africa

SUBJECT Population of Tsumeb/Native Labor/Tsumeb Corporation
and Government Relations/Mining Activities/Germanium
Production

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- The population of Tsumeb at present January 1954 is five thousand; two thousand of these are Europeans and three thousand are natives. Of this total population 2200 work for the Tsumeb Mining Corporation, or 2200 natives and 600 Europeans. The balance of the Europeans are independent businessmen operating retail stores. In Tsumeb; the rest of the natives are house servants or farm laborers.
- The Ovampo, Herero and the Bushmen are the three tribes who work and live in the area. The Herero and the Bushmen, who have always lived in the vicinity of Tsumeb, are not subject to the government regulations on native labor recruitment. Only the Ovampo are required to return to their tribe in Ovamboland at the end of a 13-month work contract, but if the native wishes, he may recontract for one, two or six months before returning.
- Native labor is recruited by the Native Commissioner who is stationed at Grootfontein or Tsumeb. The Native Commissioner, upon a request for native labor, informs (fnu) Eads who is stationed in the tribal reserves as a recruiting officer. There is also one medical officer in the reserves who gives each native a physical examination before the native is sent to Tsumeb where, if he is going to work for the mine, he is given another physical.
- House servants may be acquired through the Tsumeb Corporation or by applying directly to the Native Authority. Most of the Europeans prefer to go through the company for their servants because they can then return the native to the company if he proves unsatisfactory, otherwise the European is responsible for the native for a full thirteen-month period.
- The natives present very few problems. They commit a slight amount of burglary, which is kept to a minimum by requiring that they have a pass before leaving the compound at night.* There has recently November 1953 been a little more policing in an effort to keep the natives out of the township. There are 12 European policemen and perhaps 30 native police in Tsumeb, including a police sergeant.

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13. Perhaps the most significant future development at Tsumeb will be the production of germanium on a pilot plant scale in six to eight months. The metal is disseminated through the ore at one pound per ton with a present recovery of 40%. There is enough germanium at Tsumeb to supply the entire world. However, the Belgians in the Congo are going after it fast and may possibly glut the market, although Tsumeb may be able to keep up with them. The company's aim is to get some germanium as a talking point.

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